



East County Citizens Advisory Board Annual Report



Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center

3300 Briggs Chaney Road

Silver Spring, Maryland 20904

Tel # 240-777-8400 Fax # 240-777-8410

eastco.citizen@montgomerycountymd.gov

www.montgomerycountymd.gov/eastco

September 2009 – August 2010

Montgomery County Executive

Isiah Leggett

Montgomery County Council

Phil Andrews, President

Mike Knapp

Roger Berliner

Marc Elrich

Valerie Ervin

Nancy Floreen

George Leventhal

Nancy Navarro

Duchy Trachtenberg

Table of Contents

East County Citizens Advisory Board	
Introduction	1
Board Priorities	1
Board Priorities Alignment with the County Executive's Priorities	2
About the Board	3
Acknowledgements	4
Board Members Serving in 2009-2010	5
Board Photo	6
Board Activities	
Presentations to Board	7
Notable Community Involvement	14
ECCAB Issues/Updates	15
Committee Issues and Accomplishments	
Outreach Committee	
Organized Events	18
Community Outreach Reports	19
Services Committee	
Education	20
Public Safety/Transportation	20
Recreation	23
Health and Human Services	23
Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee	
Burtonsville Legacy Plan	25
Burtonsville Traffic Patterns	26
EC Science Center Master Plan (Colesville/White Oak)	26
Board Testimony on East County Priorities 2010	28
Board Testimony on FY 2011 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Budget	30
Board Testimony on FY 2011 Operating Budget	31

Introduction

The East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) is pleased to present this Annual Report which details its accomplishments for 2009-2010. This report outlines how ECCAB focused on the priorities of the community and its efforts to improve the quality of life in Montgomery County as the Board tackled issues and concerns related to the material and social needs of the residents of East County.

Board Priorities

In January 2010, ECCAB members participated in a Board retreat. Based on their personal knowledge and experiences, the Board members generated a list of areas to be addressed and these priorities, which aligned with the County Executive's Eight Priorities, carried into 2010-2011 year. (See the table below)

ECCAB Priority Alignment with the County Executive's Priorities

County Executive's Eight Priorities	ECCAB Priorities
Affordable Housing in an Inclusive Community	
Children Prepared to Live and Learn	We believe that maintaining our county's world-class education system must be a top priority. However, we understand that in these difficult budget times, money must be spent wisely. We therefore urge the county to maintain school spending as a percentage of the overall county budget.
An Effective and Efficient Transportation Network	Intercounty Connector – Serving as a communication conduit for neighborhoods to the State Highway Administration (SHA). Support for East County Science Center Master Plan and the Burtonsville Neighborhood Plan.
Healthy and Sustainable Neighborhoods	Support for youth recreational activities including maintaining funding for the Paint Branch Sports Academy. Continue to support existing community facilities, including the Good Hope Community Center.
Responsive, Accountable County Government	
Safe Streets and Secure Neighborhoods	Support the Regional Service Center IDA Sector Police/Community Partnership effort to prevent crime and make neighborhoods safer. Continue to advocate for traffic safety, focusing on pedestrian safety. Support the location of a new fire-rescue station in the vicinity of Route 29 and Tech Road. Support new Third District Police station in East County and maintain police sub-station at the East County Regional Services Center.
Strong and Vibrant Economy	Revitalize the Burtonsville Business District, including road improvements. Continue to monitor the expansion of the Federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the proposed development of the Percontee Village Science Proposal as part of the East County Science Center Master Plan. Advocate for the East County Technology Center.
Vital Living for All Our Residents	Focus on relocation of Washington Adventist Hospital. Advocate for green spaces, parks/Improvement on environmental issues.

About the East County Citizens Advisory Board

In March 1993, the County Executive, with the approval of the County Council, established the East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB).

ECCAB has 18 members representing the residential and business communities covered by the Master Plan areas of Cloverly, Fairland, and White Oak. These areas are roughly bound on the west by the Northwest Branch, on the north by the Howard County line, on the east by the Prince George's County line, and on the south by the Capital Beltway, I-495.

Mission

The mission of ECCAB is to advise the Montgomery County Executive and the County Council on concerns and issues facing our region and advocate for regional priorities.

Monthly Board Meetings

ECCAB holds its meeting on the first Wednesday of the month, from September through July. Committee meetings are held the following Wednesday.

The Board receives presentations on matters of public interest, many of which relate to budget, transportation, and land use issues. Community residents can express concerns to the Board during its monthly meetings. Issues raised by community members are sent to either to a committee to be vetted or to the appropriate County departments for action and tracked by the Regional Service Center staff. Discussions during the Board's meetings provide a balanced assessment of problems faced by residents and businesses in the regional service area and help to identify potential solutions.

Acknowledgements

We wish to express our thanks to all Board members who gave generously of their time in advancing the work of the East County Citizens Advisory Board. These volunteer Board members give of their time and energy to help improve the quality of life for all East County residents.

We are grateful for the committee leadership. We especially thank Tom Aylward, chair of the Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee; Anthony Ramirez, chair of the Services Committee; and Amjad Chaudhry, chair of the Outreach Committee. The Board was successful in carrying out many activities in this past year because of their hard work.

The Board wants to convey special thanks to **Joy Nurmi**, Director; **Chuck Crisostomo**, former Assistant Director; and **Anjoo Chohda**, Senior Executive Administrative Aide, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center. Their support is invaluable to the work of the East County Citizens Advisory Board.



Joy Nurmi
Director, EMRSC



Chuck Crisostomo
Former Asst. Director, EMRSC



Anjoo Chohda
Sr. Exec. Admin. Aide, EMRSC

Board Members Serving in 2009-2010

Officers

Bill Strassberger	Chair
Marva Deskins	Vice Chair
Eric Luedtke	Parliamentarian
Anthony Ramirez	Secretary

Development and Infrastructure

The Development and Infrastructure Committee handles issues related to transportation, economic development, housing, environment, taxation, capital improvements, budget, property and zoning and monitors the implementation of Master Plans in eastern Montgomery County. Committee members were: Tom Aylward (Chair), G. Stanley Doore, Eric Luedtke, David Kochanski, Esq., Bill Strassberger, Saschane M. Stephenson and Peter Myo Khin.

Services

The Services Committee handles issues related to education, aging, health, human services, public safety, and recreation. Committee members included: Anthony Ramirez (Chair), Odessa Shannon, Dwayne Parris, and Kim Bobola.

Outreach

The Outreach Committee handles publicity, lobbying, and special events. The committee plans special events, forums, and other outreach efforts to the larger community. Committee members included: Marva R. Deskins, Esq. (Chair), Amjad Chaudhry, Vanessa Ali, Allan Mulligan, Alfreda Payne and Benoy Thomas.

EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

2009-2010



Standing L-R: Alan Mulligan, Dwayne Parris, Amjad Chaudhry, Eric Luedtke, Tom Aylward III, Anthony Ramirez, Bill Strassberger, Peter Myo Khin, Benoy Thomas and G. Stanley Doore
Seated L-R: Marva Deskins, Esq., Odessa Shannon, Vanessa Ali, Alfreda H. Payne and Kim Bobola

Board Activities

During 2009-2010, ECCAB was immersed in activities that focused on the material and social needs of the residents of East County. These activities served as a bridge between the community and County government.

Presentations to the Board

Councilmember Nancy Navarro, District 4 (September 2, 2009)

Councilmember Nancy Navarro discussed her priorities, goals and accomplishments since taking office in June 2009. She discussed her request for 100% on-site forest conservation on the site of the new Third District Police Station; passage of ZTA 09-05, which prevents future storage facilities in the Burtonsville Overlay Zone; her successful efforts to prioritize the East County Science Center Master Plan in order to increase east county jobs and amenities; the Office of Legislative Oversight's pending report on the County's structural budget deficit; and the difficult work ahead on the Fiscal Year 2012 operating budget.

Update on Fire and Rescue Facilities in East County (October 7, 2009)

Chief Richard Bowers, Fire and Rescue Department, gave an overview of the personnel and duties of the Fire and Rescue Department. Specifically, Chief Bowers spoke about the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Emergency Communications Center. Chief Bowers also spoke about the Safety in the Neighborhood program and the significant role played by the department in this initiative. Currently, the department is looking at the response times and resources needed in East County. The department is also planning another fire station in the East County.

Update on ezStorage (October 7, 2009)

Craig Pittinger, Vice President of Sienna Corporation, provided information about the company and the proposed ezStorage building that the company hopes to locate at the intersection of US Route 29 and MD 198. Mr. Pittinger shared a package of information with the Board that displayed views of the building, how the proposed storage facility will be situated on their property, and the proposed building's visibility from various locations. Mr. Pittinger also spoke about the layout, signage, hours of operation and modern features proposed for the ezStorage facility.

Update on Burtonsville Revitalization (November 4, 2009)

Roylene Roberts, Chief, Neighborhood Revitalization, Department of Housing and Community Affairs, provided an update on what the Department plans to accomplish in the upcoming year:

- Conduct individual pedestrian lighting surveys and CPTED analysis with property owners.
- Complete a street face design and analysis of parking challenges and opportunities.
- Work with individual property owners on façade designs.

These three projects are the basic components to implement one of the key short-term recommendations of the Burtonsville Community Legacy Plan: redesign public and private space along MD Route 198, transportation and parking.

The department submitted a Community Legacy application in July, 2009 to fund two projects:

- 1) Develop and implement façade design concepts and standards for the commercial core businesses along MD Route 198.
- 2) Develop and implement gateway identification signage to boost the community's sense of place and design and install greenscape enhancement to act as buffers between pedestrians and traffic.

Washington Adventist Hospital (December 2, 2009)

Jere Stocks, President, Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH), distributed folders to Board members containing detailed information on Adventist's proposed new hospital that would be located in East County. Park and Planning has approved its site plan and WAH filed for a Certificate of Need with the State in April, 2009. One of the silver linings of this current economic slump is that the new East County relocation of the WAH will now cost \$96.2 million less to construct as originally estimated. The project's new price is close to \$468 million.

The hospital will sit on 23 acres of the 48-acre site on Plum Orchard Drive near Cherry Hill Road and Route 29. It will have 288 beds in mostly single-occupancy rooms, along with emergency services, a center for spiritual life and healing, outpatient care and a lakeside walking trail. The current hospital in Takoma Park is relocating because of its current inaccessibility and insufficient size.

The Non-Profit Village (December 2, 2009)

Kim Jones, former East County Citizens Advisory Board member, gave a presentation on the Non-Profit Village, which partners with the Jewish Council on the Aging. The Village is dedicated to meeting the workspace needs of community-based non-profit groups. The village's mission is to develop and sustain the organizational and collaborative capacity of their tenants by providing affordable, attractive, shared office space accompanied by management and operational services.

Department of Economic Development (January 6, 2010)

Steve Silverman, Director, Department of Economic Development, provided an overview of the vision, mission and efforts of the Department of Economic Development, the current employment situation in the county and the loss of 14,000 jobs due to the economic crisis. He highlighted the following developments in East County:

- 1) Food and Drug Administration: The FDA is in process of leasing 52,000 square feet of commercial space off campus in the White Oak area. Several buildings meet its criteria and it is an opportunity to fill empty office space with employees.
- 2) Washington Adventist Health Care: Locating in East County will increase employment opportunities here.
- 3) Percontee, Inc.: Mr. Silverman talked about the role of the company and its significance to life sciences and economic development in East County.
- 4) East County Technology Center: Due to litigation, the selection of a developer is on hold. A court decision is expected by summer/early fall of 2010.
- 5) Burtonsville Crossing: The County Executive is concerned about the economic vitality of that Center and has asked the County's Department of Economic Development to work with the property owners to identify economic opportunities.
- 6) White Oak Shopping Center: Starbucks, Blockbuster Video, Pearle Vision Center and Rite Aid Pharmacy have moved out. Walgreens is arriving and the County is working with them.

Percontee, Inc. (January 6, 2010)

Jonathan Genn, Executive Vice President and General Counsel for Percontee, Inc., made a presentation of the planned life sciences development at Percontee. Percontee is one of several companies owned by the Gudelsky family, one of the region's largest developers. Their vision is to create a place for people to live and work.

The LifeSci Village concept began in 2004, soon after the FDA began building their new campus at the Federal Research Center in White Oak. It would create synergy with the East County Center for Science and Technology. The 290-acre site is envisioned as a series of "neighborhoods," each with a different mix of uses. A "north neighborhood," closer to existing office parks along Tech Road, would house predominantly commercial and light industrial activities. An "east neighborhood," across from the Riderwood Village retirement community along Cherry Hill Road, would mostly contain housing. Between them would be a "village center" with housing, offices, and retail.

Washington Adventist Hospital (January 6, 2010)

Robert Jepson, Executive Director of Public Strategy and Communications for Washington Adventist Hospital, gave an overview of how the hospital will partner with the FDA and create economic development opportunities in the East County.

Burtonsville Revitalization (February 3, 2010)

Roylene Roberts, Chief, Neighborhood Revitalization, Department of Housing and Community Affairs, distributed copies of the County Executive's Capital Improvements Program (CIP) document, which detailed the Burtonsville Revitalization. Included in the CIP proposal was \$945,000 earmarked for Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 and \$1,080,000 earmarked for FY12. The proposal is to support the business community in Burtonsville and increase investment potential through gateway signage, façade improvements and pedestrian lighting.

Department of Human Rights (February 3, 2010)

Jim Stowe, Director, Department of Human Rights (DOHR), gave a presentation on their department, whose major charge is to investigate alleged discrimination in housing, employment or public accommodations. Their investigators work with all parties involved in a neutral manner. The Department attempts to determine if discrimination took place. DOHR also works on ensuring that residents do not experience impeded access to County services due to language barriers.

Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (February 3, 2010)

Joy Patil, Community Services Officer, 3rd District Department of Police, presented a program she promotes in the community entitled “Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).” Officer Patil explained that this is a crime prevention program that focuses on the building/landscaping design process as an important component to physical security.

Montgomery County Police Department can give input from a law enforcement perspective on security issues, landscaping, etc., during a design phase. Though CPTED input is not required for businesses under construction, it is highly recommended.

Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department (March 3, 2010)

Tami Bulla and Len Newman, Burtonsville Volunteer Fire Department (BVFD), updated Board Members on the status of BVFD, the services their volunteers provide each year, especially during the recent snow blizzards, the cost savings to County residents and factors that may impact their ability to provide the high caliber of services the community has grown to expect. During this fiscal climate, they need to effectively partner with all stakeholders to maximize efficiencies and ensure continued success. They welcomed this opportunity to exchange information and solicit input from the community.

Operating Budget for Fiscal 2011 (April 7, 2010)

Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg, chair of the Council’s Management and Fiscal Policy (MFP) Committee, called County Executive Leggett’s recommended Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Budget a product of the region’s economic downturn and an opportunity to build a new government foundation anchored in fiscal responsibility and long-term planning. Councilmember Trachtenberg said that due to the continued severity of the current economic recession and the associated dramatic revenue reductions in the current fiscal year, Montgomery County faces a historic projected gap of nearly \$780 million in the FY 11 Operating Budget and that the County Executive’s recommended budget closed that gap. In spite of the budget shortfalls, the county continues to focus on its priorities on education, health and human services and public safety.

Fire and Rescue Services (April 7, 2010)

Chief Richard Bowers, Department of Fire and Rescue Services, provided a presentation on and asked for the Board’s continued support on the Emergency Medical Services Transport Fee. Chief

Bowers stated that under the proposed legislation, County residents would not pay anything for ambulance service. The fee will be billed directly to residents' insurance companies, which have already factored the cost of patient transport into their rates schedules. The fee will be waived for uninsured residents.

Chief Bowers stated that Montgomery County is one of the few jurisdictions in the region not already (or in the process of) collecting an EMS fee from insurance companies. It is project to net at least \$12.7 million in the first full year of operation and one hundred percent of the net proceeds would be dedicated to meet the rising costs and increasing resources demands of the County's fire service, and to fund enhancements.

Operating Budget for Fiscal 2011 (May 5, 2010)

Councilmember George Leventhal, Chair of the Health and Human Services Committee, shared an update on the Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Budget. Councilmember Leventhal stated that the County is \$400 million below estimates in income tax and discussed that energy taxes will increase by \$8 to \$10 per household per month under the current budget proposal. As Chair of the Council's Health and Human Services Committee, Councilmember Leventhal supports and oversees programs for Montgomery County's neediest residents including the elderly, sick, poor, homeless, mentally ill, and abused and abandoned children.

Burtonsville Shopping Center (May 5, 2010)

Chris Jones, BMC Property Group, provided a presentation updating the Board on Burtonsville Town Square (Burtonsville Shopping Center). Mr. Jones stated that Giant is relocating across the street from its current location and is expected to open before Labor Day. The CVS Pharmacy and Chevy Chase Bank are scheduled to open in Late May. More restaurants and shops will be moving in to buildings A, B and C. Mr. Jones also said the center is installing a fully operational traffic signal and crosswalk at the entrance that would allow pedestrians to easily cross from the commuter lot behind Burtonsville Crossing Shopping Center to Burtonsville Town Square.

East County Science Center Master Plan (June 2, 2010)

Khalid Afzal, Team Leader for the Maryland Park and Planning, provided a presentation on the East County Science Center Master Plan. Planners are setting the stage for a master plan that will support an expanding federal agency and a growing biosciences industry in Eastern Montgomery County. The East County Science Center Master Plan will create a vision for an expanded Cherry Hill Employment Area with the goal of creating a mixed-use life sciences center that builds upon the presence of the Food and Drug Administration campus in White Oak. It is intended to address the land use, urban design and environmental issues. It also will address the need for mobility options in the area. The proposed master plan will make recommendations for a science center that is functional, attractive, safe and highly accessible by:

- Providing housing and amenities to complement existing and future employment activities.
- Creating mixed-use, walkable development nodes served by transit.

- Addressing the capacity of roads, schools and other public facilities.
- Creating open space.
- Protecting environmental resources in the watershed.

Update on County Operating Budget (June 2, 2010)

Nancy Floreen, Council President, shared an update on the Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Budget. Council President Floreen stated this year has been an extraordinary and unprecedented fiscal experience, due in large part, to the 21 percent decline in income tax revenue, and a historic increase in unemployment. The Council approved a \$4.3 billion total County operating budget for Fiscal Year 2011, which begins July 1. The overall tax-supported budget of \$3.66 billion reflects a decrease of \$191 million from the FY10 adopted budget, a decrease of five percent.

To achieve equity in the allocation of limited funds, the Council reduced spending for Montgomery County Public Schools by \$24.4 million. These funds will be used to mitigate deep cuts in the safety net and other vital services, including Montgomery College. The budget freezes pay for employees of County government, Montgomery College, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and MCPS. The budget re-establishes the reserve at six percent, which should help maintain the County's AAA bond rating. On the revenue side, some other taxes and fees will go up. The energy tax will increase with the increase split between residential and commercial users and the tax on wireless phones will increase from \$2 to \$3.50 per month.

Presentations by Non-Profit Organizations (July 7, 2010)

Polly Gantz, Director for the Eastern Montgomery Emergency Assistance Network (EMEAN), provided an explanation of EMEAN. The non-profit agency's core mission is to provide housing, utility, or prescription assistance to families in crisis. EMEAN will refer customers to other programs/agencies, as appropriate. EMEAN's approach is customer-centered – it seeks to empower families towards self-sufficiency. Referrals for emergency services are made through Montgomery County Health and Human Services. EMEAN assists residents that live in Montgomery County's zip codes 20903, 20904, 20905, 20866, and 20868. Families in crisis must first apply to DHHS and a referral will be sent to EMEAN. Housing and utility assistance requires a referral from DHHS.

Tawana Wheeler, Director for The People's Community and Wellness Clinic (TPCWC), stated that the agency has been operating in East County since August 2002. Their mission is to provide quality primary, ambulatory health care to adults in Montgomery County, especially in East County, who are unable to afford private health care and have no health insurance. TPCWC is co-sponsored by Montgomery County Government and the People's Community Baptist Church of Silver Spring. Clinical services are provided to uninsured adults (over 19 years of age) who meet low-income guidelines, are ineligible for government-assisted health care, and can demonstrate that they do not have personal assets, financial reserves, or sufficient family resources to support their own medical care.

Barbara Clark, Clinical Director for Mobile Med Care, Inc., provided background on Mobile Med. The mission of Mobile Med's volunteers and staff is to provide quality health care to the uninsured, low-income, working poor and homeless in Montgomery County. The volunteers and staff currently serve more than 7,000 of the community's most vulnerable and isolated residents. The clinical staff is diverse and speaking French, Spanish, Farsi, Chinese and other languages. Twenty-three health clinics are located throughout Montgomery County, and each clinic operates at regularly scheduled times in churches, government buildings and public housing facilities.

Notable Community Involvement

Community Events

Members of the East County Citizens Advisory Board participated in a number of community activities, including several community festivals. At these celebrations, Board members disseminated information about the services of the East County Regional Services Center; discussed concerns identified by East County citizens; and shared ways that ECCAB acts on these concerns. These community events included:

- 1) Community Services Day (October 24, 2009): Over 200 bags were decorated and filled with donated toiletries, toys and school supplies by volunteers (ECCAB members, residents and students) for victims of domestic violence. The bags were dropped at the Betty Ann Krahnke Center for New Beginnings, the County's shelter for domestic violence victims.
- 2) Martin Luther King Day (January 18, 2010): ECCAB members worked with eight non-profit organizations to increase volunteer participation. The non-profits set up tables and met with theatre-goers on Martin Luther King Day at the AFI Theater in Silver Spring. Over 500 residents attended the event. The non-profits reported recruiting many new volunteers!

Festivals

Burtonsville Day

The Burtonsville Day celebration was held on Saturday, September 26. Board members took part in the Burtonsville Day parade and joined East County Regional Services staff, Park and Planning Staff and our Community Service Police Officer, Joy Patil to inform residents about the Burtonsville Neighborhood Plan and crime prevention.

The ECCAB Services Committee operated a Health Fair at this event, which brought together over 18 health organizations to inform residents and perform a variety of health screenings, give flu shots and free vitamin D tests.

Colesville Strawberry Festival

Members of ECCAB also participated in the Colesville Strawberry Festival on May 22, 2010. They staffed an outreach booth, and handed out information and talked to many residents about services and activities in the East County.

ECCAB Issues/Updates

White Oak Recreation Center

On April 24, 2010, several ECCAB members joined County Executive Ike Leggett at a ceremony to celebrate the groundbreaking for the White Oak Recreation Center located at 1700 April Lane in White Oak. The 33,000 square-foot recreation center will be a state-of-the-art environmentally friendly designed building. It will include a gymnasium, exercise room, social hall, kitchen, senior/community lounge, arts/kiln room, game room, vending space, conference room, offices, lobby, restrooms, computer lab, multi-use athletic court, and storage space. Construction is currently on schedule and is expected to be completed by winter 2012.

Paint Branch High School Modernization

On March 20, 2010, ECCAB members attended the Paint Branch High School groundbreaking. When it reopens in 2010, Paint Branch High School will be transformed into a state-of-the-art environmentally friendly school with LEED certification. It will be three stories high and house 2,400 students and will be located south of the current building near the football stadium. When the new school opens, the existing building will be demolished and the new athletic fields will be built there. The new Paint Branch High School will have a 900-seat auditorium, 12 science labs, a greenhouse, 10 computer labs, and classrooms dedicated to art, the academies of science, media, medical careers, finance, culinary arts, NJROTC and child development.

Northeast Consortium

There have not been any changes to the Northeast Consortium and ECCAB will continue to monitor the program's status. The Northeast Consortium serves students in the "base areas" of Blake, Paint Branch, and Springbrook high schools. Each campus offers a comprehensive high school curriculum plus a distinctive 'Signature Program.'

Fire and Rescue Station

A new fire station is planned to be built in the Eastern portion of the county. The site for this new Fire Station is in the general vicinity of Tech Road and route 29. ECCAB has designated a liaison for the Fire Station Site Evaluation Committee. The committee will convene in 2011, and will continue to monitor the location of the new fire station.

InterCounty Connector

Construction of the Intercounty Connector (ICC) has begun including the portion that runs through East County. The Board will continue to monitor residents' concerns as construction progresses.

Burtonsville Revitalization

The Board continues to closely follow plans to revitalize the Burtonsville business district. The Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) will be working with property owners in the Burtonsville business district on façade improvements and standards for the commercial core businesses along MD Route 198, and to develop and implement gateway identification signage and streetscaping to act as buffers between pedestrians and traffic.

The Burtonsville Town Square (Burtonsville Shopping Center) re-opened after a rebuilding phase. Several stores are open including Giant, CVS Pharmacy and Chevy Chase Bank.

Traffic concerns

The State Highway Administration (SHA) responded to the County's request for a stoplight at MD 650 and Quaint Acres Drive (near White Oak Library), and approved the stoplight for this location.

ECCAB members continue to be concerned with the traffic problems around Burtonsville including near the Burtonsville Business District, Route 198 and McKnew Road, and Dino Drive.

FDA

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will house approximately 9,000 employees by 2013. Transportation is an issue. FDA currently has three metro bus routes that pass the campus and also have a continual shuttle route from the Silver Spring metro station. The FDA supported the construction of the additional sidewalks at the Four Corners area on Route 29. The FDA continues to engage in discussion and plan collaborative projects with the Washington Adventist Hospital (WAH).

ECCAB members took a tour of the campus on April 24th. Labquest Chair, Betsy Bretz, guided ECCAB members through several buildings and members had the opportunity to see where the FDA conducts clinical trials for drugs and medical devices prior to approval.

Zoning Text Amendments

The Board sent a letter supporting Zoning Text Amendment (ZTA) 09-05, Burtonsville Overlay Zone – Allowed Uses, which were introduced on June 19, 2010 in the County Council by Councilmember Nancy Navarro (District 4). The proposed ZTA would have affected ezStorage, a proposed self-storage facility in the Burtonsville Industrial Park. In October, the Board amended its position, to support ZTA 09-05, but with a grandfather provision for ezStorage. The letter also asked the Council to include a provision that would preclude other storage facilities in the Burtonsville Employment Overlay Zone. The Council passed ZTA 09-05 unanimously in October 2010 with the Board's recommendations. The ZTA as passed also prohibits the following uses in the Burtonsville Employment Overlay Zone: Adult entertainment businesses; agricultural uses; aircraft parts, sales and services; highway fuel and food service; off-loading and transfer sites for storage of sand, gravel or rocks; parking of motor vehicle, off-street, in connection with any use permitted in a

commercial zone; recycling facility, rifle or pistol ranges, warehousing and storage services (industrial and commercial users and self-storage facilities); stockyards; outdoor storage; and, trucking terminals.

The Economic and Development Committee also began to look into ZTA 10-07, RNC zones – Off-Street Parking. This bill would not allow public institutions in residential zones with parking for more than 50 vehicles unless the entrance to the parking is located within 500 feet of an arterial road or a road at least 4 lanes wide. The Committee was asked to consider a position on ZTA 10-07.

Third District Police Station

The Board continued to advocate for the new Third District Police Station to be built in White Oak. The project must go in front of the Planning Board for mandatory referral, where Planning Board will hear staff recommendations and public comments and then make a final recommendation on the project. Planning Board recommendations are guidance to government, and are not requirements; however, the project must meet the State forest conservation law. The mandatory referral has been tentatively scheduled for December 16, 2010.

IDA Sector Meetings

On September 16, 2009, the Regional Service Center hosted the first in a series of community meetings with the Third District Police, homeowners associations, residents, businesses, apartment managers and local school officials, to discuss resident and business concerns about crime, and to have the police provide an update on criminal activity in the region. ECCAB members have attended these meetings and have reported back any issues of concern. Subsequent IDA sector meetings have occurred on January 21st, March 9th, May 13th, July 29th, and October 22nd.

Committee Issues and Accomplishments

The standing committees include: *Outreach, Services, and Economic Development and Infrastructure committees.*

Outreach Committee Accomplishments

The Outreach Committee handles issues relating to networking, lobbying, communications, and publicity. The committee also plans for special events, forums, and other outreach efforts to the larger community.

The Outreach Committee had an active and successful year this term. The Committee's community outreach activities have enhanced the ECCAB's reputation in the community, and garnered more interest in the Board's meetings and activities.

Organized Events

Martin Luther King Day (1/18/10)

The Outreach Committee took the lead in partnering with the East County Regional Services Center and the Silver Spring Regional Services Center to have a volunteer drive for East County and Silver Spring non-profit organizations on Martin Luther King Day at the American Film Institute (AFI) Theatre in downtown Silver Spring. The event was attended by approximately 500 people and Outreach Committee members prepared bags for the non-profit organizations to hand out that contained giveaways, literature from the non-profit organizations, information on the East County and Silver Spring Regional Service Centers and census information.

Census Outreach (3/27/10 and 4/10/10)

The Committee participated at the Census 2010 outreach to the community at Safeway in the Briggs Chaney Plaza and the Giant in the White Oak Shopping Center. On March 27th, five Outreach Committee members, along with East County Regional Services Center staff and a Census worker, went to Briggs Chaney Plaza and gave out Language flyers, sample census forms, ice scrapers and beverage mugs to an estimated 200 people. The Committee members handed out over two dozen census questionnaires to people who said they had not received one. The Outreach committee on April 10 conducted another outreach event at the White Oak Shopping Center.

Community Outreach Reports

PTA Elementary School Meeting (11/3/09)

Marva Deskens attended the PTA meeting at Greencastle Elementary School and met with Principal Winters, who had previously attended the ECCAB meeting and voiced some concerns around the safety of the children walking to school.

Montgomery County's Summit on the Future of Libraries (11/17/09)

Amjad Chaudhry and Alfreda Payne attended the Summit and provided Board members with materials from the Summit.

LabQuest

Alfreda Payne and Center Director Joy Nurmi regularly attended LabQuest meetings and kept Board members updated on activities occurring at the FDA Campus.

Services Committee Accomplishments

The Services Committee handles issues related to education, aging, health, human services, public safety, and recreation. The following section describes the accomplishments of the Services Committee in the areas of education, transportation/public safety, recreation, and health and human services.

Education -Paint Branch High School

The Services Committee continued to track the progress of Paint Branch High School's remodeling and building. The project had been delayed several times due to a shortfall in revenue. However, groundbreaking for the new Paint Branch High School occurred in March 2010.

Public Safety/Transportation

The Service Committee drafted a letter advocating on behalf of East County, regarding budget cuts and its impact to County services and departments – Police Substation, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, and East County Recreation Programs. The Board approved an amended letter that focused on the Police substation followed by the Service Center and then recreation programs.

April 7, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Ms. Floreen:

Gauging – and communicating – **what government services** (e.g. Eastern Montgomery County Regional Services Center, East County police substation, and Recreation Programs) **are worth** to the residents of East County has never been more important.

After years of strong growth, the county is being dragged down by a critical budget shortfall. In response to this shortfall, the County Executive has submitted an operating budget to the County Council that includes service reductions that are intended to have a minimal impact on citizens. The County Executive is to be commended for the approach utilized to identify *service reductions*, which resulted in suggested cuts that are both practical and generally equitable across Montgomery County.

Despite the feasibility of the County Executive's service reductions, the East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) is respectfully requesting that the County Council move beyond the current approach to service reductions toward one that's more flexible. Under this alternative, levels of service may not necessarily be the same across regions of the county. Rather, levels of service could be adjusted to address the *inevitable variation in residents' needs*. Under this approach, the *value of services in a particular region* would be part of the decision.

Advocacy on Behalf of East County

East County is one of the needier regions of the county, as it is an area that is impacted by both poverty and the presence of non-English speakers. East County also has higher crime rates in several categories (e.g., auto thefts) than other regions in the county report in their crime statistics. Further, East County has had the need numerous times for a greater police presence to address an uptick in crime. On those occasions, the county's Police-Community Actions Teams, or P-CATs, have been brought to East County in order to provide the assistance needed in this region.

Based on the unique data needs in the eastern region of the county, ECCAB is requesting that the County Council: (1) Delay closing the East County police substation until the new 3rd District Police Station is built; (2) Consider the impact of reduced staffing at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center. It is essential - especially during the current economic downturn -- to maintain a vital county government presence in the eastern region of the county; and (3) Maintain recreation programs at the Good Hope Recreation Center, and also carefully assess the impact of reductions to the Rec Extra program at East County middle schools.

- **East County Police Substation**

The proposed budget calls for the removal of the East County Police substation. The new 3rd District Police Station will not be open for several years. Therefore, ECCAB would like to keep the East County Police substation open until the new police station opens its doors.

- **Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center**

In 2002, Montgomery County created the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center (EMRSC) to facilitate public access to government guidance, programs, and services. The facility houses the regional services center staff, as well as the East County Police substation and the People's Baptist Church Wellness Center. Until April 8, 2010, EMRSC will also house a satellite office of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). After April 8, the DHHS satellite office will be closed, and a DHHS staff member will no longer be available to help in providing coverage of the building.

What would the staffing reductions mean to East County? Without adequate staffing, the front desk of the EMRSC may be left unattended or services may need to be provided by appointment only. Already, ECCAB members attending evening meetings have encountered people coming to the services center for assistance, who are visibly let down when they find the building closed.

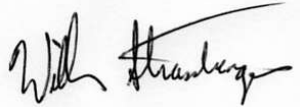
ECCAB is concerned that the impact of inadequate staffing may be to discourage the public from coming to the center. For that reason, ECCAB is requesting the Council's consideration of the staffing needed to maintain EMRSC as a vital place for people to come for assistance and to keep the center open to the public until a future time when services will return to the center.

- **East County Recreation Programs**

Under the proposed budget, the Sports Academies will be cut and the number of Rec Extra sites that provide support for middle school students will be reduced. ECCAB wants to be sure that these cuts will not disproportionately affect youth programming and East County middle schools.

Government services mean a great deal to the residents of East County. As one of the needier regions of the county, this area of the county benefits greatly from the county presence at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, the East County Police substation, and county recreation programs. ECCAB is requesting that the County Council consider the unique needs of each region in establishing levels of services. Making decisions based on information and specific data gives the county the means to get a **value-added return** on their efforts.

Sincerely,



William Strassberger
Chair, East County Citizens Advisory Board

The Service Committee drafted a second letter of support for the Emergency Medical Transport Fee. The full Board approved the letter unanimously.

April 7, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Ms. Floreen:

The East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) supports Bill 13-10, which proposes to use the Emergency Medical Services (E-M-S) Transport Fee as a revenue source, with funds collected being dedicated to Fire & Rescue and EMS purposes only.

Bill 13-10 is a clear and straightforward way to get funding back to the community. It requires no County resident to pay anything, and results in no change in service. This fee, which is charged-back to insurers, is in use in more than 60% of jurisdictions nationally – and throughout the DC metropolitan area – except in Montgomery County. The EMS Transport Fee will provide Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Services with the funds needed today to maintain high levels of service to all parts of the County, and support our local volunteer departments.

We are bothered that a misinformation campaign has misled the average person.

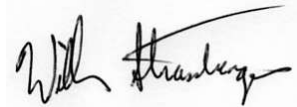
- ECCAB believes the concern about funding splits with volunteer departments should not be confused with the discussion, since this concern can be resolved separately.
- ECCAB finds there is no evidence from jurisdictions that have successfully implemented this fee that it deters anyone from calling for needed emergency medical transport assistance.
- As ECCAB also discussed, insurance companies have EMS Transport coverage. As with all expenses, they will add these costs to the total as they develop rates for purchasers and users of insurance. The total dollars in this category are a tiny percentage of their overall coverage.

Thus, ECCAB concluded: One would be challenged to spot the rate increase attributable to this expense.

In reality, the EMS Transport Fee will have little impact on citizens, since the “charge-back” to insurers is not anything a County resident will ever see. Conversely, it will have a huge impact in supplying Fire & Rescue Services with the dedicated resources it needs for the services it provides, without having to raise taxes for this purpose.

We urge you not only to support this bill, but also to strengthen it with amended language that ensures the funding remains within Fire & Rescue Services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Strassberger', is written over a light gray rectangular background.

William Strassberger
Chair, East County Citizens Advisory Board

The Services Committee members continue to attend the IDA Sector meetings between the Regional Service Center, police, residents, apartment managers, business owners and others, and report any issues of concern back to the full Board.

Service Committee members also continue to track the progress of the traffic light at the corner of Route 650 and Quaint Acres Drive.

Recreation

The development of the White Oak Recreation Center continues to be a high priority for the Services Committee and for East County Residents. The groundbreaking for the recreation center occurred on April 24th and the Services Committee will continue to track the Center’s construction.

Health and Human Services

Services Committee members, in conjunction with staff from the EMRSC and other volunteers coordinated and volunteered at Community Service Day on October 24th, 2009. Because October is National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, the Center decided to merge the two worthy projects (community service day and domestic violence awareness). Over 40 volunteers created gift bags filled with needed items for victims of domestic violence and their children who find themselves at the Betty Ann Krahnke Center for New Beginnings, a domestic violence shelter operated by Montgomery County.

In July, members of the Services Committee began to plan a Community Health Fair to be held at the Marilyn Praisner Recreation Center during Burtonsville Day, September 25th, 2010. Members began attending other community health fairs and sent over 40 invitations to non-profits, County agencies, private business owners, health clubs and other entities to participate in the East County Health Fair.

The Health Fair successfully brought together over 18 health organizations to inform residents and perform a variety of health screenings, give flu shots and free vitamin D tests.

Economic Development and Infrastructure Committee Accomplishments

The Development and Infrastructure Committee handles issues related to transportation, economic development, housing, environment, taxation, capital improvements, budget, property and zoning, and monitors implementation of Master Plans in eastern Montgomery County.

Burtonsville Legacy Plan

The Committee tracked the status of the Burtonsville Legacy Plan issues, giving special attention to infrastructure needs & coordination with State and County departments and agencies.

April 19, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Ms. Floreen:

The East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) would like to make you and the entire Council aware of our support for initiating the “Route 29 Mobility Study” and the “Burtonsville Neighborhood Plan”, as soon as possible. We understand that there is an opportunity to conduct the studies within the FY 11 budget, to provide the maximum benefit to the County they should be in early FY 11.

Without a doubt, the ICC construction is moving forward nearly on schedule. This connector will bring immediate access to I-95, and rapid access to I-270. With this vital link in place, the more than 300 acres just south of its intersection with Route 29 will be truly *open for business*.

This land area is primarily 3 large properties, Percontee, Site 2 and the Adventist Hospital site. This prime real estate needs the Study, and zoning changes, to unlock its potential. Just south of these properties, the FDA facilities at the Federal Research Center (FRC) continue to grow, adding jobs and the need for space to house the workforce and companies that do business with the FDA.

As you can see, this important land area lies between the new Transportation link and the FRC. A zoning change that makes possible mixed uses, such as residential, business and commercial/retail, all in a well planned area, will be the invitation to generating capital investment in the East County.

At the same time, a “Neighborhood Plan” should be crafted for the business center of Burtonsville, a short but important strip of RT 198 that incorporates the land within half a mile of RT 198 north and south. The Burtonsville Legacy Plan should be the starting point for this study, which will ensure that the County funds, which are already committed, truly serve as the catalyst for a rapid revitalization.

Now is the time to act. If we do not have the tools in place *before* the ICC highway is finished, we’ll be passed by as the economic growth will occur elsewhere. We all know a building project can take a couple of years from inception to putting the shovel in the ground. The ability of

investors to prepare their plans during the last year of the ICC construction is critical to meeting this economic opportunity with an open door.

Sincerely,

Marva R. Deskins
Acting Chair, East County Citizens Advisory Board

Burtonsville Traffic Patterns

The Committee continues to focus on traffic patterns around Routes 29 and 198 in Burtonsville. The main focus is how to create traffic patterns that make these roads better for businesses and not an alternative to the ICC.

East County Science Center Master Plan (Colesville/White Oak Master Plans)

The Committee drafted a letter, referencing the Gaithersburg West plan and the needs of the East County for similar consideration. In this regard, the letter requested action on an amendment to the White Oak Master Plan to encourage the designation of a Life Sciences Center zone.

March 4, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Ms. Floreen:

I am writing on behalf of the East County Citizens Advisory Board to follow up on a letter that we sent on November 9, 2009 with respect to the Gaithersburg West Master plan.

We would like to make it clear that we agree, as we heard in the presentations at our January Board meeting, that we recognize that creating quality life science jobs in the Gaithersburg West area will foster a synergy for life science economic development across the entire County, and particularly in parts of the East County. Key assets, such as the Food and Drug Administration at White Oak, the Washington Adventist Hospital relocation, the Percontee Project, and the East County Science and Technology Center, will all be located in this region, and will present a significant economic development opportunity.

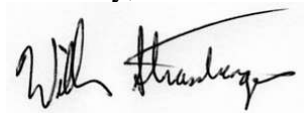
However, to recognize this potential, the East County will require strong support from County government. Specifically, Percontee is developing plans for a Science and Technology live/work community. This will likely require a Master Plan amendment to the White Oak Master Plan. We would urge the County Council to make this

master plan amendment a priority and move it ahead in Park and Planning's work plan, from 2013 to 2011. Washington Adventist Hospital is proceeding with its plans for relocation off Plum Orchard Drive in Calverton. We want to provide support for this project as well, and we urge the County Council and the County Executive to support the hospital's Certificate of Need application with the State of Maryland.

Further, we understand that the East County Science and Technology Center is currently stalled due to litigation. When the litigation is resolved, we would urge the County Executive and Council to make this project a priority, and add the project into back into the Capital Improvements Program budget as soon as possible.

We hope this clarifies our position and we thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Will Strassberger", is written over a light gray rectangular background.

William Strassberger
Chair, East County Citizens Advisory Board

Board Testimony

ECCAB Testimony on East County Priorities 2010

February 23, 2010

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett:

On behalf of the East County Citizens Advisory Board, I would like to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to present the priorities that are of utmost importance to the East County region. These priorities are the sum of community forums, surveys, and comments received from members of the community who have attended our monthly Board meetings in the past year.

The 2010 East County Priorities are as follows:

1. Education

We believe that maintaining our county's world-class education system must be a top priority. However, we also understand that in these difficult budget times, money must be spent wisely. We therefore urge that you maintain school spending as a percentage of the overall county budget.

2. Public Safety

Police Staffing

Ensuring the safety of residents and businesses is crucial to maintaining and increasing development in the East County region. In the past year, there have been increased concerns about criminal activity; particularly in the Briggs Chaney area. Indeed a principal from one of our elementary schools told us that parents are fearful of walking their children to and from his school. In response, the East County Regional Service Center has hosted a number of community meetings with police, local businesses, apartment managers, and members of the community to address these concerns. However, ensuring adequate funding for police staffing would greatly assist in addressing this problem.

Fire Station

Additionally, a new fire-rescue station is needed in the vicinity of Route 29 and Tech Road. The additional station would reduce response times and increase public safety in the vicinity of Riderwood Village, the Manors of Paint Branch and the Rolling Acres neighborhoods, as well as the industrial and technology parks on and around Tech Road.

3. Recreational Services for Youth

Youth recreational activities serve as a core deterrent from gang involvement and other criminal activity. To wit, we support maintaining funding for the Paint Branch Sports Academy, which provides a positive and healthy activity for local high school students. We also urge the continued support of existing community facilities, including the Good Hope Community Center. There is concern that activities at the Center may be negatively impacted by budget cuts. We also believe that the renovations-- which include an additional classroom, a weight and exercise room, and the expansion of the gym and lobby areas-- are necessary facility enhancements. The Center, which is in close proximity to the Briggs Chaney area, has the potential to engage youth that congregate at the Briggs Chaney Shopping Center, and may serve as a divergence from gang and other destructive activity.

4. Economic Development

Burtonsville Revitalization

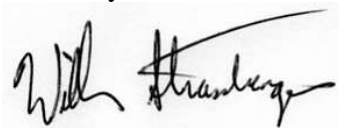
We support the \$4.2 million allocated in the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget for the Burtonsville Revitalization Project. Small businesses along Route 198 in Burtonsville have seen a significant decline in business since the construction of the grade-separated interchange at Route 29. Consequently, we believe that the Burtonsville Revitalization Project, which focuses on supporting existing small businesses and creating new opportunities for private investment, is critical to the economic health of this area.

FDA

We also recommend that county planners create a new sector plan for the White Oak and Fairland areas surrounding the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) campus to include mixed use and balanced zoning, and focus on the creation of new jobs in the East County.

Thank you for your attention to the 2010 East County Priorities.

Sincerely,



Bill Strassberger
Chair, East County Citizens Advisory Board

c. Joy Nurmi, Director

ECCAB Testimony on FY 2011 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Budget

Honorable Councilmembers. Good evening. My name is Bill Strassberger. I serve as the chair of the East County Citizens Advisory Board, and want to thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf on our advisory Board.

The East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) appreciates the opportunity to make recommendations regarding the County's 2011-2016 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) budget. We urge that you support the following capital project requests: (1) schools in East County; (2) the White Oak Community and Good Hope Neighborhood Recreation Centers; (3) the proposed East County Fire-Rescue Station; (4) and the Burtonsville revitalization.

ECCAB, in partnership with the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, co-sponsored a Citizens CIP Forum on June 10, 2009. Approximately 20 individuals contributed to the forum discussions. The CIP priorities for East County were then discussed at the July meeting of ECCAB and are described below. We recommend the following capital projects:

1. **School Facilities.** ECCAB supports the school system's long-range Capital Improvement Program. We are pleased that additions to Fairland and Jackson Road Elementary Schools are moving forward. As you know, enrollment projections reflect the need for a nine-classroom addition at Fairland Road Elementary School and an 11-room addition at Jackson Road Elementary School.

We also want to thank the Council for approving a supplemental that will allow Paint Branch High School to move forward with its construction this year.

2. **Burtonsville CIP.** Small businesses along Route 198 in Burtonsville have seen a significant decline in business since the construction of the grade-separated interchange at Route 29. Because of this, we believe the Burtonsville Revitalization CIP Project, which focuses on supporting existing small businesses and creating new opportunities for private investment, is critical to the economic health of this area. The ECCAB has worked closely with the Department of Housing and Community Affairs (DHCA) to formulate a Community Legacy Plan to revitalize this corridor. The Plan is the product of wide community input and provides a set of short- and long-term strategies to enhance Burtonsville. The Burtonsville

Revitalization CIP project embodies these strategies and will help assure that Burtonsville can become a vibrant commercial area.

3. **Recreation Facilities and Services.** ECCAB enthusiastically supports the renovations for Good Hope Neighborhood Recreation Center. We believe these projects are vital for youth activities and services to our community. It is critical that the Center renovations move forward on schedule so that our youth will have more opportunities for after-school and weekend activities in the surrounding neighborhood communities. We believe that the renovations (e.g., weight and exercise room, an additional classroom, locker rooms and an expanded lobby and gym) would also encourage greater use by all of our residents.

4. **New Fire and Rescue Station.** We continue to be concerned about the gap (below the county target) in response time coverage for first-responder and fire suppression services within the Calverton area and vicinity. This poses service risks for Riderwood Village, the Manors of Paint Branch and Rolling Acres neighborhoods, and the industrial and technology “parks” in the vicinity of Tech Road.

We are concerned about the increasing incident call load within East County, particularly the emergency medical services call load. The most urgent concern is the medic units at Stations 12 and 15. These units are extremely busy and cannot absorb East County’s increasing advanced life support call load.

The new Fire-Rescue Station is needed in the vicinity of U.S. Route 29 and Tech Road. It would house a medic unit and engine and have the extra space for housing future apparatus and reserve units.

5. **Burtonsville Access Road.** The Board supports the delay in the Burtonsville Access Road project given the realistic projections of timing for the State Highway Administration’s improvements and realignment of Route 28/198 through Burtonsville. We understand the County’s Department of Economic Development, Department of Transportation, Department of Housing and Community Affairs, the Regional Service Center and the community will be working with the State Highways Administration to integrate the Burtonsville revitalization efforts with the plans for Route 28/198.

We thank you for your attention to the needs of the residents of East County.

ECCAB Testimony on Fiscal Year 2011 Operating Budget

April 7, 2010

The Honorable Nancy Floreen
President
Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Ms. Floreen:

Gauging – and communicating – **what government services** (e.g., Eastern Montgomery County Regional Services Center, East County police substation, and Recreation Programs) **are worth** to the residents of East County has never been more important.

After years of strong growth, the county is being dragged down by a critical budget shortfall. In response to this shortfall, the County Executive has submitted an operating budget to the County Council that includes service reductions that are intended to have a minimal impact on citizens. The County Executive is to be commended for the approach utilized to identify *service reductions*,

which resulted in suggested cuts that are both practical and generally equitable across Montgomery County.

Despite the feasibility of the County Executive's service reductions, the East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) is respectfully requesting that the County Council move beyond the current approach to service reductions toward one that's more flexible. Under this alternative, levels of service may not necessarily be the same across regions of the county. Rather, levels of service could be adjusted to address the *inevitable variation in residents' needs*. Under this approach, the *value of services in a particular region* would be part of the decision.

Advocacy on Behalf of East County

East County is one of the needier regions of the county, as it is an area that is impacted by both poverty and the presence of non-English speakers. East County also has higher crime rates in several categories (e.g., auto thefts) than other regions in the county report in their crime statistics. Further, East County has had the need numerous times for a greater police presence to address an uptick in crime. On those occasions, the county's Police-Community Actions Teams, or P-CATs, have been brought to East County in order to provide the assistance needed in this region.

Based on the unique data needs in the eastern region of the county, ECCAB is requesting that the County Council: (1) Delay closing the East County police substation until the new 3rd District Police Station is built; (2) Consider the impact of reduced staffing at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center. It is essential -- especially during the current economic downturn -- to maintain a vital county government presence in the eastern region of the county; and (3) Maintain recreation programs at the Good Hope Recreation Center, and also carefully assess the impact of reductions to the Rec Extra program at East County middle schools.

- **East County Police Substation**

The proposed budget calls for the removal of the East County Police substation. The new 3rd District Police Station will not be open for several years. Therefore, ECCAB would like to keep the East County Police substation open until the new police station opens its doors.

- **Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center**

In 2002, Montgomery County created the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center (EMRSC) to facilitate public access to government guidance, programs, and services. The facility houses the regional services center staff, as well as the East County Police substation and the People's Baptist Church Wellness Center. Until April 8, 2010, EMRSC will also house a satellite office of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). After April 8, the DHHS satellite office will be closed, and a DHHS staff member will no longer be available to help in providing coverage of the building.

What would the staffing reductions mean to East County? Without adequate staffing, the front desk of the EMRSC may be left unattended or services may need to be provided by appointment only. Already, ECCAB members attending evening meetings have encountered people coming to the services center for assistance, who are visibly let down when they find the building closed.

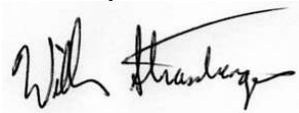
ECCAB is concerned that the impact of inadequate staffing may be to discourage the public from coming to the center. For that reason, ECCAB is requesting the Council's consideration of the staffing needed to maintain EMRSC as a vital place for people to come for assistance and to keep the center open to the public until a future time when services will return to the center.

- **East County Recreation Programs**

Under the proposed budget, the Sports Academies will be cut and the number of Rec Extra sites that provide support for middle school students will be reduced. ECCAB wants to be sure that these cuts will not disproportionately affect youth programming and East County middle schools.

Government services mean a great deal to the residents of East County. As one of the needier regions of the county, this area of the county benefits greatly from the county presence at the Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center, the East County Police substation, and county recreation programs. ECCAB is requesting that the County Council consider the unique needs of each region in establishing levels of services. Making decisions based on information and specific data gives the county the means to get a **value-added return** on their efforts.

Sincerely,



William Strassberger
Chair, East County Citizens Advisory Board

- c Hon. Isiah Leggett, Montgomery County Executive
Joy Nurmi, Director, Eastern Montgomery Regional Services Center